



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

HISTORIC SPOTS IN WISCONSIN

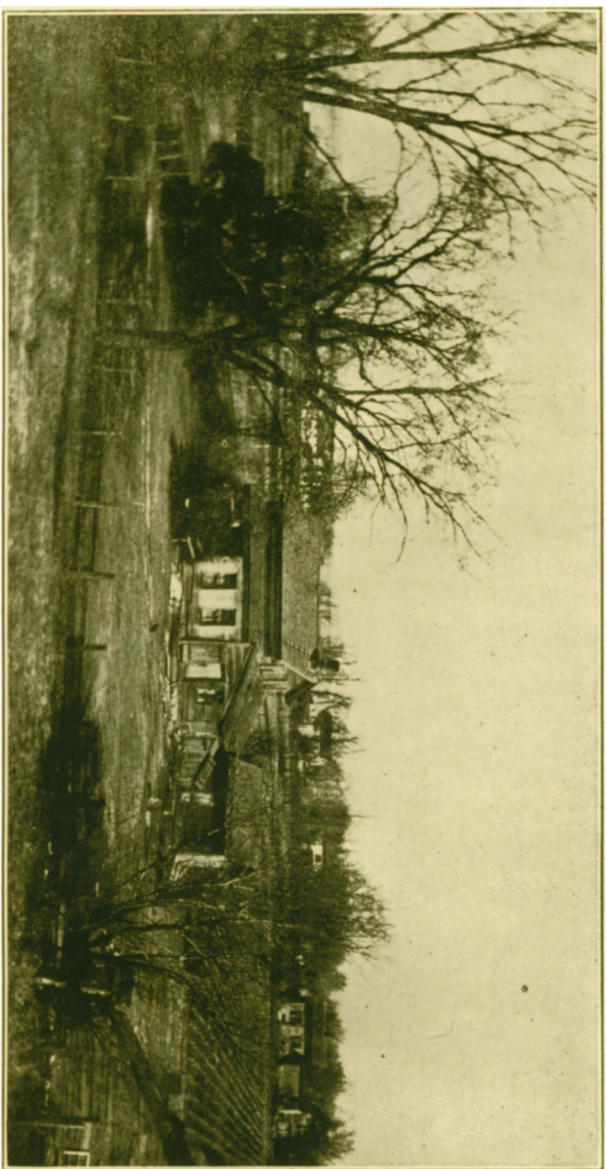
W. A. TITUS

III: TAYCHEEDAH, A MEMORY OF THE PAST

Yet it was not that nature had shed o'er the scene
Her purest of crystal and brightest of green;
'Twas not her soft magic of streamlet or hill,
Oh! no—it was something more exquisite still.—Thomas Moore.

On the east shore of Lake Winnebago about three miles in a northeasterly direction from the mouth of the Fond du Lac River lies the decayed hamlet of Taycheedah. It is credited with a year-around population of one hundred and fifty and has a good public school, a Methodist church, a post-office, and a small general store. It has a weather-beaten shed where passenger trains stop on signal, but has no station agent and no freight service. This commonplace description would fit any one of a hundred small towns in Wisconsin, but Taycheedah is not commonplace; it has a history reaching as far back as the first settlement of the Lake Winnebago region and was once the social and cultural center of Fond du Lac County with a commercial importance that eclipsed the neighboring settlement of Fond du Lac.

The first white explorers found an Indian village on the site of Taycheedah; in 1795 it is recorded that Sar-ro-chau was the chief of the Winnebago band at this point. Grignon speaks of Sar-ro-chau as "one of the best of Indians." The old chief took part in the War of 1812 and died soon after the close of hostilities. His son, Charatchou, better known as The Smoker, aided the whites in the pursuit of Black Hawk's warriors in 1832. The Taycheedah Indians were long remembered by the early traders and settlers because of their friendly attitude and their willingness to assist the newcomers when other Indian bands became unruly.



THE OLD VILLAGE OF TAYCHEDAH

In the years of exploration and early settlement all travel routes from the Green Bay settlements to the Fond du Lac region followed the east shore of the extensive inland lake, and the travelers were sure to pass through Taycheedah as a gateway to the prairie region beyond. These pioneers were enthusiastic about the possibilities of this old Indian camping ground as an ideal location for a village or a city. A settlement was begun at Taycheedah in 1839 which soon outstripped the earlier and rival settlement at Fond du Lac. There was little to commend the Fond du Lac location at this early day. The land on which it was built was marshy and almost as low as the lake level; the drainage problem, if it occurred to the early settlers at all, must have seemed next to impossible. Inundations occurred every spring when the snow melted on the surrounding hills. From a geographical viewpoint, however, Fond du Lac was the logical place for a city. Situated at the upper point of the lake, future railroad lines from both sides would necessarily converge there, and this prospect must have gone far to overcome the effect of the depressed and cheerless terrain. The harbor facilities, also, were superior to those of Taycheedah.

From the sandy shore line at Taycheedah the level land, covered by great groves of forest trees, stretched backward for a full mile, and then came the picturesque ledge two hundred feet high with another area of level wooded country above. From the higher levels the view across the lake was indescribably beautiful, and the entire topography seemed to lend itself to the building of an attractive urban center.

These respective advantages and disadvantages caused the rival settlements to contend for the supremacy for a number of years, although in the early forties Taycheedah was by far the larger place. About 1848, however, Fond du Lac began to attract settlers in such numbers as to establish its supremacy for all time. The final result was largely due to the foresight of Dr. Mason C. Darling, who having acquired

much real estate in Fond du Lac donated a site for the courthouse as well as for many of the new business ventures in the struggling community. It is said that real estate in Taycheedah was held at a high figure by speculators, but the outcome was exactly the reverse of what these land-owners expected. Money was scarce in the new country, and business concerns located where lots could be secured free rather than where they were held for fancy prices.

The first settler in Taycheedah was Francis D. McCarty, who built his home there in 1839. The beauty of the location attracted the better class of early settlers from the East, and it was said that in the decade between 1840 and 1850 more than half of the prominent men of Fond du Lac County, the local aristocracy so to speak, lived in Taycheedah, and many of these men were known throughout Wisconsin. The first public schoolhouse in the county was built in Taycheedah in 1842. Governor James D. Doty assisted in the actual work of construction, and the school bell, the first ever heard in Fond du Lac County, was the gift of Col. Henry Conklin. This bell was brought by Colonel Conklin from the dismantled steamer *Advocate* which was wrecked on the Hudson River; it is interesting to know that the old bell still calls together the juvenile population of the vicinity. Edgar Conklin was the teacher of this pioneer public school, which served the people of both Taycheedah and Fond du Lac. On its records were inscribed the names of Darling, Conklin, Ruggles, Perry, Moore, Carlton, and Elliott—families that later became well known in Fond du Lac when the business interests of Taycheedah were transferred to the more promising village at the end of the lake. The first general store in Taycheedah, opened in 1841, was owned by B. F. Moore and J. T. Moore. This store served the entire region northward to Brothertown and did a thriving business, the daily cash receipts often running as high as several hundred dollars. B. F. Moore later became the owner of the La Belle Wagon Works, one of the

leading manufacturing industries of Fond du Lac in the seventies and eighties.

A hotel was built in Taycheedah village as early as 1840; F. D. McCarty, who was later elected county sheriff, was the first landlord. Later this hotel was owned by Nathaniel Perry until the old building became inadequate to accommodate the many travelers who came to or passed through the village. Mr. Perry then built a much larger hotel. This hostelry under the Perry management was known from Green Bay to Chicago for its genuine hospitality and the excellence of its meals. The Perry family later moved to Fond du Lac where one of the sons, J. B. Perry, was for more than fifty years connected with the oldest bank of the city as bookkeeper, cashier, president, and chairman of the board of directors. He still lives in retirement in Fond du Lac, beloved by the thousands of his fellow citizens whom he so courteously served and assisted during his long career as a banker.

While the Taycheedah harbor was never a good landing place for any except the smallest craft, it is a fact that the first steamboat that ever floated on Lake Winnebago made its maiden trip from Taycheedah. This vessel was the *Manchester*, Capt. Stephen Hoteling, master. In 1843 Captain Hoteling brought the boat from Buffalo, New York, to Taycheedah, where it was overhauled and repaired. For a number of years Taycheedah was the southern and Neenah the northern terminus of this steamboat line; Fond du Lac and Oshkosh were intermediate stopping places for the *Manchester*.

In 1850 there were in operation in Taycheedah a large flour mill and a sawmill. The foundation of the flour mill may still be seen near the lake shore. A tin shop, a dry goods store, and two blacksmith shops were additional industries of the thriving village during the period of its prosperity.

Colonel William J. Worth (later General Worth of Mexican War fame) camped at Taycheedah village in 1840

with a regiment of regular troops. Mrs. Louisa Parker Simons, who was a resident of the vicinity at that time, gives in her *Pioneer Reminiscences* of 1879 a very interesting description of the event. Her husband supplied the troops with milk and other food luxuries during their brief stay.

Among the early settlers of Taycheedah village, few had the advantages of birth, culture, and education to such a degree as did Colonel S. W. Beall and his talented wife whose maiden name was Elizabeth Fenimore Cooper. Colonel Beall was a native of Maryland and a direct descendant of the Randolphs of Virginia, the Carrolls of Carrollton, Maryland, and the Singletons of South Carolina. He was educated at Union College where he excelled as a classical student. Later he studied law and was admitted to the bar. In 1827 he married Miss Cooper, who was a niece of James Fenimore Cooper and of Governor Morris of New York, and a great-granddaughter of Lewis Morris, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. In 1835 the young lawyer was appointed Receiver of Public Lands for Wisconsin and Michigan and with his young wife came west and located at Green Bay. This appointment was obtained through the influence of Chief Justice Roger Taney, who was a close friend of the Beall family in Maryland. In 1837 the Bealls returned to Cooperstown, New York, where their luxurious and hospitable home became the rendezvous for the literary celebrities of the time, among whom were Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. In 1840 Mr. Beall again brought his family to Green Bay and two years later built a comfortable pioneer home in Taycheedah village where he resumed his law practice. With a few temporary interruptions, Taycheedah was the home of the Beall family for many years. Mr. Beall was chosen a delegate to both constitutional conventions, the one whose instrument was rejected by the people and the one which framed the present constitution of Wisconsin. In 1850 he was elected lieutenant gov-

error of the newly-formed commonwealth. After his term of office expired he went into the Rocky Mountain region, largely because of his love of adventure; while on this expedition he with others located the city of Denver, Colorado.

When the Civil War broke out, Mr. Beall enlisted as a private, although he was at that time fifty-four years of age. He was rapidly promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel of the Eighteenth Wisconsin Volunteers. Colonel Beall fell severely wounded at the battle of Pittsburg Landing but recovered sufficiently to reënter the service and was placed in command of a prison camp. After the war ended he went to Helena, Montana, then a rough border town, where in 1868 he was shot and killed during a political altercation.

Mrs. Beall devoted the later years of her life to Christian work and to a broad charity that knew neither class nor creed. She died in 1879 and is buried in the little Protestant cemetery above Taycheedah. The foundations of the old Beall home in Taycheedah still remain, but the grounds that surrounded the old house are now used as a pasture.

As before stated, the decline of Taycheedah became apparent before the Civil War, and nearly all of the old families removed to Fond du Lac or elsewhere, taking with them in many cases the business in which they had been engaged. The site still remains, beautiful as ever, but the glory of the once prosperous village has long since departed, and its present moribund condition attracts the attention of even the casual visitor. However, the lake shore is no longer untenanted, for a continuous line of summer homes fringes the water for miles, and lake front lots have a value never dreamed of in the old days of Taycheedah's prosperity.